

593 dances in the mourning for him. All varieties of brothers within the
764 clan are included, the activity being really more a clan than a fraternal
function.

593 Among brothers within the clan fighting is not allowed, but among
602 brothers who belong to adjoining clans warfare is quite common.

786 Although the Murngin and the other seven tribes who share their
837 type of kinship have a very strong feeling against the younger brother's
copulating with an older brother's wife under ordinary circumstances, there is a period among the peoples practicing the Gunabibi ceremony when sexual "license" is recognized and even demanded between brothers and their wives. This is, however, strictly regulated; only brothers from more distant clans would be invited and allowed to exchange wives for ceremonial copulation. The tribal ideal of this custom is that a few nights before the end of the ceremony older brothers call their consanguine younger brothers and ask the latter to go to the nearby camp of the distant brothers in attendance at this ceremony, taking the older men's wives with them. The older brothers in the visitors' camp do likewise. The men and women paint themselves and go into the bush in the nearby jungle for copulation. The last night one woman may stay with several men, for a larger proportion of men than women always attend, since wifeless brothers usually enter into this ceremony. After a man has had intercourse with a tribal brother's wife, the husband puts his sweat on both of his guest's legs "so that he won't be sick from it." The men meanwhile have been giving presents to the women for some time before the ceremony and the women turn the gifts over to their husbands, although they frequently keep part for themselves. In reality, there is an exchange of presents, as well as of wives, among these more distant brothers.

[437] The above is a tribal ideal. Actually, copulation purely for pleasure starts early in the ceremony, while the last night's indulgence is a purification rite supposed to cleanse a man and woman of impurities and to avoid illness during the period between the present ceremony and the next. The men and women have clandestine meetings, but it is generally known which people are having these assignations in the surrounding bush or jungle, and many broadly humorous remarks are passed by both sexes about their various lovers. However, some men and women would not enter into this earlier secret copulation, but would wait until the last night.*

*The ritual place of wife exchange and its significance are treated in the chapter on Murngin totemism, particularly pages 306-308.

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Mutual fidelity is demanded by husband and wife. She is supposed to stay away from all other men, and according to tribal law he is not allowed to cohabit with any women except his wives. Nevertheless, adultery is very common. A woman, if she has not been married before, is supposed to come to her husband sexually untouched. The idea back of this is that she has always been his wife and could therefore not have had physical relations with another man. Frequently women have had intercourse with other dué before starting to live openly with their own husbands. This causes much indignation and usually results in a beating for the girl and a heated quarrel between the husband and the lover, who usually allows the outraged husband to use more vituperation, since the lover and the tribe recognize that he is in the wrong, and it pleases the husband to believe that he has had the better of the argument.

The attitude of the male part of the tribe toward the infidelity of a galle may be seen in the following story believed by the natives. It concerns the father of Danitcha, Danitcha's father's young galle, and her lover. Danitcha is an old man who is still living and belongs to the people along the Murngin borders. It happened when Danitcha was still a fish (unborn), he says, and when his father was a young man. We shall let Danitcha tell the tale.

Back in the bush my father came; he called to his young galle mielk, "Come on, we'll go look for wild honey." The woman went with him. Before this she had had no sexual relations with him. He saw the tracks of a bandicoot going inside a large hollow log. He crawled up to the tree. He said, "Come on, you come on up and look, too. I think we'll catch a bandicoot." She came up. He said, "You squat down with your hands on your knees ready to catch him if he comes out."

The man was lying down pretending to look into the hollow tree's hole, but he was casting his eye up at the girl's vagina. "Oh," he thought, "someone has opened her before, and she's my galle, and I haven't." He knew this because the opening was large. He got up. "I couldn't find anything in there," he said, "I think we'd better go." "Let's go drink some good water," he said. "Where?" "This way at a rock pool that I know about." They went to the rock. It rose straight into the air and was high like the clouds. The rock had a forked stick ladder. It was very long. He climbed up the pole. In the center of the rock was a deep hole that ran through it far down into the earth. It had water in it far below, and it stank with the dead bodies of women who had been untrue to their husbands. He pretended to drink, then came down. "Has it good water?" she asked. "Yes, it's full up. You go up and have a drink. I'll wait for

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you." She climbed higher and higher until she reached the top. She looked down and the man looked small. Then she found the rotting bones of the hundreds of women left there to die by their husbands since the time of Wongar because of their adulteries. She tried to hurry away. She looked down, the ladder was gone. She cried out. "Dué! Dué! Dué! I'm a young woman, and I am yours, you've never had me. Look at me! This vagina is yours! These breasts are yours! Look!" He looked at her and in sign language he told her that she'd had another man. He walked away.

She cried and cried and looked down from all sides of the rock, but there was no way to escape. She cried and cried, but it was no use. She could see the forked stick ladder far below, where her dué had thrown it.

The dué went to camp. The girl's mother sent word (she was mokul rumeru to him and therefore could not talk to him) to ask where her daughter had gone. "I don't know," he lied, "I've been out by myself. She didn't come with me. All of you go look for her." They looked for five days, but no one found her. The man went away quietly. He went to the rock and stood off some distance to see if he could see her. "Ah, she's alive yet." He made a camp and stayed. At the large camp people still looked for her. He came back to the main camp. After six days he went again to the rock. The woman was very near death and in a state of coma. She was very weak and her eyes were closed. He went back to camp and stayed five or six days more and then came again to the rock. He couldn't see her. He raised the forked stick and crawled to the top of the rock. On top it was flat all over. In the middle was the deep hole. His galle, while kicking in her death struggle, had fallen into it. He took a spear, hooked it to his spear-thrower, and threw it straight into the air. The spear came down and went into the rock hole and fell into the body of the dead woman. When the spear hit her he could hear the drone of giant blowflies in the depths of the rock cavern. He went back to camp. Everyone was still looking for the girl. The dué joined in the hunt. "I think," he said, "that maybe someone has stolen her, or it may be someone has killed her magically."

He sent word to all her people to help him find her. They looked for days and days but she was never found. This happened in the country of the Nullikan and Rainbarngo tribes.

Sometimes the husbands only keep their wives there a few days to teach them a lesson, and then let them return to camp. At other times the husband takes the lover and wife to this rock and leaves them. When they arrive at the rock the husband says, "You two can go get some water." They both go up at the same time. When the woman and her lover arrive on the flat stone, he takes the ladder down. One lover cried out, "What about this woman of yours? Don't you want her?" "Oh, you can have her now, I'll make her a present to you."

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The story is told to the women and believed by them. It was recorded at a time when there was much serious talk among the men that two women caught by their husbands in adultery should be sent there. 684
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If a wife continues to be unfaithful she might be killed by her *dué* and members of her own family. Usually the *dué* would depend upon a magician to accomplish this (see Magic, pages 194-206).

A beating is the usual punishment for a wife's adultery. Garawerpa, an old man of the Daiuror clan, put fire on his wives' vaginas, as did Binindaio when their galls copulated with Willidjungo, the medicine man. With the beating goes a severe tongue-lashing. An outraged wife who has caught her husband in a sexual relation with another woman resorts to public abuse of her mate for his infidelities. Her obscenity and abuse are usually more proficiently and much more adequately expressed than a husband's. 837
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At noon one day Bruk Bruk, the young and attractive wife of Lika, who had inherited her from an older brother, accused Djolli, a man from a more distant clan, of trying to seduce her in the bush. A tremendous noise was made in the camp. All the relatives of the parties concerned talked at once, and the two men armed themselves with spears, spear-throwers, and clubs and charged at each other, exchanging curses.

Djolli was angry because he claimed to be falsely accused; and so was Lika because he knew something was wrong, for either his wife had defended her virtue against Djolli, or she had succumbed and then accused him. In either case his self-esteem had been injured. Djolli's wife, an older woman, no longer attractive, stood by, and instead of helping her husband, the usual thing for a wife, screamed at him: "You belong to me. I am your sexual partner. You are like a dog. You are incestuous and sleep with your own mothers and sisters. Why don't you keep your penis where it belongs—in me, not other women?"

The galle has another recourse. She can attack and abuse her husband's mistress. A wife usually feels that it is the other woman's fault anyway.

Balliman, a young man noted for his fighting and dancing abilities, was Mumulaiki's lover, so camp gossip had it. Balliman's wife (he had inherited her), who was much older than he, took her digging stick and, with the aid of much cursing, gave Mumulaiki a thorough thrashing. Both women were in a fainting condition when the fight was stopped by others. Their heads were cut open and they were covered with bruises and cuts.

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837 A further variation in the standards a husband and wife apply to
518 each other may be seen in the following account. Here, too, it will be noticed, when *dué* is not very assertive, *galle* is on more or less equal terms with him.

Dimala's wife was known about the various tribes as a woman who usually had an affair with some other woman's husband and was not always particular whether these lovers stood in the right relationship of *dué* to her. Dimala, too, always had a number of affairs. One day his wife abused him for having such relationships. "Yes," he replied, "I've got one woman, and you can do nothing. You've got your lovers—I've got my sweethearts. My head can think two ways. When you stay quietly by me and have no lovers, I'll sit quietly by you and have no sweethearts."

Such an understanding between spouses is most unusual and considered somewhat asocial. Ordinarily a husband would feel it his duty to beat his wife when she conducted herself in an unlawful way with another man.

Dimala, too, would have felt it necessary to beat his wife and condemn her for the act if she had been caught openly fornicating with someone. Tribal feeling would have driven him to it if his pride had not.

837 Five varieties of extra-legal sexual relations between men and
588 women are recognized as possible, i.e., the tribe would not condemn them as unpardonable offenses against customary law: (1) relations when the legal spouse of either or when both spouses are carrying on an affair without the mate's full knowledge; (2) runaway matches when the man and woman go to a distant clan to live—usually a true love match, but not always; (3) a union when a man steals a woman from her husband and takes her to his own clan; (4) a union when warring clansmen kill off the husbands of the women and keep them for themselves; and (5) the union of a daughter whose father has given her to a relative without a legal claim to her in another tribe.

Each of the above is considered illegal and condemned by all people, yet each is practiced to a considerable degree among all the tribes in this region, and each frequently leads to a permanent union that has full tribal recognition.

837 In the first type of liaison the man and woman usually meet in the
bush for a lovers' assignation, which always means sexual intercourse. A man ordinarily would choose a *galle* for such affairs, and a woman a *dué*; but they occur between *momo* and *kaminyer*, little *arndi* and

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waku, gawel and waku, and one case has been reported of momelker and dumungur. This last is very rare and has a strong taboo against it. All relationships except the above are completely taboo, and no one would any more think of such an extra-legal union than a normal man in our society would consider a liaison with his own mother. All the above affairs would be with distant relatives and not the actual ones.

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Much indignation usually is caused by a gawel-waku liaison if discovered, though several were observed. This sentiment would not be that of the injured wife or husband alone, but of the tribe generally. Men having such a relationship with waku or momelker would be called dogs and considered evil-doers even by their own people, who might be defending them at the time from the attacks of the girl's husbands and relatives. The woman would most certainly receive a severe beating and occasionally be killed.

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The regulation that a younger brother is not allowed near an older brother's wife whereas an older brother may be near a younger brother's of course applies here, since, except through a wrong marriage, all men who call each other brothers would call the same women galle, and they in turn would call these men dué. Even with such limitations the dué-galle affair is a most common form of adultery because, with the exception of this one taboo, there is no restriction to deter the pair or to make the most orthodox Murngin feel he is doing anything wrong. The momo-kaminyer relationship is the next least provocative of social condemnation. Of course, this would not be actual father's mother and brother's son's son, but a younger woman and a man in this relationship.

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The men's attitude toward sexual union is one of extreme interest. While some speak but little of it, others make sex, food, and war the three subjects of their conversation. The women, however, seem even more interested than the men. They, too, vary considerably in their attitude; some are continually in trouble because of attempting to satisfy their desires by seducing young men, while others remain quiet and faithful to one man. All the men testified that there were no cold women; or rather, as they put it, all women were interested in the sexual relation. The evidence seems to verify their contentions; but caution must be exercised here since no man would admit that women were not interested in him. However, many of the men complained that their wives and other female relatives had too great an interest.

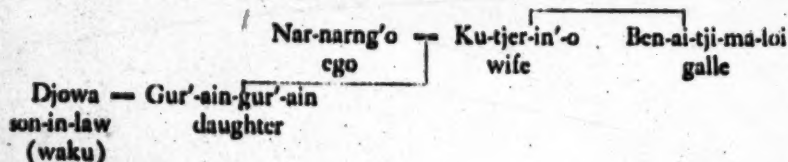
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quent and play a prominent part in Murngin life. The following genealogy is necessary to understand the happenings:

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Djowa had been away from home looking for kangaroo. He came home and while looking for tobacco discovered an opossum string in his wife's basket. Since his wife was Dua and the string had no red parrot feathers on it, his suspicions were not aroused. He was living, however, with his father-in-law, an older man by the name of Narnarngo. The latter's wife Kutjerino was Yiritja and her basket was hung beside that of the other woman. Narnarngo immediately jumped to the conclusion that it was Kutjerino the lover's string was meant for, and that her paramour had made a mistake and put the opossum string into the wrong basket. He was particularly sensitive to any such attempt, not only because of a volatile temperament that always had him in trouble, but also because recently one of his wives had been stolen. He accused Kutjerino. "To whom does this belong?" She replied, "I don't know." After questioning her for some time with no results, he approached Kutjerino's galle, Benaitjimaloi's wife, who was notorious for the number and frequency of her affairs, and accused her of placing the string in the basket. She informed him it was Bengaliwe's string, but denied placing it there.

Narnarngo began cursing Bengaliwe and accusing him of an affair with his wife, but not in his presence. A near relative of Bengaliwe heard Narnarngo's comments and rushed up to the men's camp, where he told Bengaliwe what the old man had been saying. The accused did not take the charges seriously, and went unarmed to Narnarngo's camp. When he was shown the opossum string he admitted it was his, but said that he had made it to wear around his head (opossum strings are usual ornaments). Narnarngo said that Bengaliwe was lying and had tried to fornicate with his wife.

Meanwhile another quarrel had developed in the camp because a father thought one of the black magicians was trying to kill his daughter. This second dispute developed into a general camp brawl in which Balliman, a near relative of Bengaliwe's, took part. He loved a fight for the sheer joy of exercising proficiency in battle. When his own fight had more or less quieted down, although all the participants were still excited, Balliman heard Narnarngo once again call Bengaliwe various profane terms, but not within the hearing of the latter. He went to the accused and told him.

578 "Let us go back and fight him," he said. The two took their spears and
 837 went. "Why do you keep on saying I try to lie with your wife? I didn't."
 Narnarngo called Bengaliwe "deindumelu" (big testicles). Bengaliwe re-
 plied by calling Narnarngo "golitchirtommeru" (big kidneyed). Both
 terms designate a man who would break all laws of sexual behavior.

When Benaitjimaloi heard the quarrel he came over with his four
 brothers and stood back of Narnarngo to help him. He is true galle to
 Narnarngo. Other near male relatives joined each side and a new camp
 brawl was in progress. No one was killed or very much hurt in the fight
 that followed. It was later ascertained that a small boy, unaware of the
 string's significance, had taken it out of Bengaliwe's and placed it in
 Djowa's wife's basket.

837 Sometimes a woman attempts to seduce a young man into joining
 437 her for a lovers' assignation. She usually starts by sending him food.
 After these presents have been given for a while and he is sure of
 their meaning, he usually tells the woman who brings them for her
 friend to tell the other woman where he will meet her. If they have
 an assignation, he usually makes presents to her. Sometimes young
 men are so bashful that it takes much persuasion to force them into
 such a union.

583 A runaway marriage differs from a union caused by a man's steal-
 937 ing a woman in that the woman gives her consent; such an arrange-
 626 ment has the consent of neither her people nor his; whereas in the
 628 case of theft, a man's own people frequently support him, particularly
 if there has been hard feeling between the two clans and a conscious
 rivalry for the women of certain groups. The runaway union usually
 ends in his and her people attempting to send her back to her true
 dué, because it would lead to armed trouble between the man's people
 and the members of the right dué's clan, and also for the woman's peo-
 ple if they did not condemn the act by helping the true dué regain his
 wife. However, no man's clan would desert him in such a situation to
 the point of allowing him to be killed or attacked by the injured man's
 group. Ordinarily, such a situation ends in a "growling" match, in
 which the two sides stand armed behind the two opponents, the lover
 allowing the injured husband to have the better of the cursing. Some-
 times such a runaway marriage leads to permanent union.

583 After a couple have been lovers for some time they may be so fond
 837 of each other as to risk everything and leave their own kin and go to
 a distant clan. Her people, the husband's gawel and galle, immediately
 help the injured spouse to regain his wife. The people of their groups

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generally frown upon the lovers' attempt. Further, her people consider it an affront to them by the people of her lover's clan, and it is necessary for them to protest that they had nothing to do with the matter and show good faith by helping get her back. A woman or a man can take the initiative in a runaway marriage, but most of the cases recorded were due to the influence of the woman. 583 837

Monalli had been the lover of another's wife. He had had trouble and had decided to return to his own clan. When he left, the wife went with him. He protested, when apprehended, that he did not want her and had asked her to remain with her own husband. The woman herself, although it meant a merciless beating, admitted she was the guilty one and still asked to be allowed to follow him. 837 586

Inyinyerri, a fine looking young man, ran away with Raiola's mokul rumeru (sister to the actual one) because they had been having an affair and because her due's people had stolen Inyinyerri's own father's wives and he wished to even the mark. Inyinyerri's people protested that it would cause too much trouble, and he sent her back. A neutral man was given an opossum string with a loop at one end which was put over her head; and she was led to her gurrong, who brought her to her husband. When he accepted the string it was realized that he wanted her; had he cut the string it would have meant that he did not want her.

It occurs, but unusually, that a man who is stealing, or running away with, a woman uses the head circlet to take her.

If a galle mielk ran away and her father failed in forcing her back, it would be mandatory upon him to provide the due (his waku) with a new galle. If he could not, he would try to help him obtain another and make presents to him for the loss. The same proceedings are gone through if a man's wife is childless. 587

If a husband runs away from his wife she goes to his people, usually to her mokul bupa (mother-in-law), for protection, and remains with the man's parents until his people bring him back, or she is given to a younger brother who is nearest of kin. 586

The author has recorded instances of a man's freely giving up his wife after she had run away.

Daoper, a youngster sixteen or eighteen years old, had a wife of about thirty-five who ran away with another. Her people brought her back to him. Her brother gave her a thorough beating, as did the husband, but the latter said, "He can have her, she causes me too much trouble. She's too old for me."

A custom halfway between a lovers' arrangement and a runaway

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waku and his clan; (2) the strength of the far-off waku's clan; (3) the near waku's having a number of wives and no younger brothers; and (4) the possibility that the waku may want to go without wives. There are two cases of this last on record. The old men usually try to get a man to marry and marry properly. Not only is their personal pressure felt by a man who does not wish to marry, but the whole impact of society is placed against him in hundreds of direct and indirect ways. It would be a strong man with an intense dislike of women who could retain his bachelorhood against such odds.¹²

The reader may assume from this account of illegal unions that marriage is a very unstable institution. Such is not the case. Although love affairs are common, a lifelong marriage either of a galle mielk to one dué, or to him and his younger brothers through the levirate, is the normal thing. Murngin society could not exist were this not true.

From the cases of unfaithfulness and the mechanical manner of acquiring spouses through the relationship of the parents, conjugal love might appear impossible. Although rare, it does exist. The ideal wife and husband are those who remain faithful to their spouses; on the other hand, a promiscuous woman or man is disapproved of even though not openly condemned.

To illustrate a man's affection for his wife: Mun-yir-yir had had a magically powerful totemic string given him to keep preparatory to its being placed upon another's totemic emblem. No woman may see or even hear of such a thing. His galle was burning bush for bandicoots. The fire burned and destroyed the string. All his clansmen and those of the man to whom the string belonged were extremely angry. Women had been killed before for such an offense. An old man said

¹³Occasionally one hears accounts of a number of unmarried men collecting in a group of five or six, going out into the jungle with one woman and having group sexual relation with her. One woman I knew of had done this several times; the people severely disapproved of her. She seemed a woman of insatiable sexual appetite and was continually in trouble because of it. She also seemed to stimulate all the men sexually and had a greater interest for them than some of the other women who might have been obtained. Sometimes a youth who is having an affair with an older woman will tell his friends and have them accompany him to his assignation. The other men remain back when they arrive. According to one of the accounts given me, the woman says, "Who is with you?" He replies, "My friends." She says, "Do not bring your friends, I only like you, I only want to have you." The boy says, "No, they are my friends, I'll have you first, then they can." She objects, and he says, "But I feel very sorry for them. Maybe if you don't play with them they will come use black magic on you." He keeps on talking like that and the woman listens and agrees to his proposal. There seems to be considerable evidence that what is called nymphomania among modern women also exists among these aboriginal peoples.

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593 at the time that it was to his clan as though she had killed a strong
 688 man. Her husband said nothing, but hurried her to a mission on a
 152 nearby island to shield her against possible attacks of his own people.
 He risked being injured himself for this, but he was more concerned
 for her. This was not merely because of her economic or child-bearing
 value. He had an older wife, who had borne him a daughter, whom
 he loved even more than his younger wife; and the older woman was
 still a sexual mate and a very able food-gatherer. Yet he told me he
 would have let them kill the old woman, for she was "rubbish," but
 that he liked the young galle "too much" and he could not let them
 kill her.

593 One further instance may be cited. One of Benaitjimaloi's three
 598 wives, the oldest, was notorious for her promiscuity. She had not only
 837 been beaten by him, but at one time all the people of a camp had
 thrashed her for her misconduct. Benaitjimaloi had acquired her by
 a runaway union. She had been caught in a sexual relation with Bin-
 djerpuma. The husband fought the lover and then said to everybody
 that he was tired of her continual affairs, was through with her, and
 that she could go where she pleased. Then he gave her a thorough
 beating. One of the older men in the tribe, and one of the most intelli-
 gent, said, "He won't give her away. I see inside his head. He beat her
 after he said he'd thrown her away; that shows that he likes that
 woman too much." Benaitjimaloi kept his wife.

595 A man and all his wives live in the same camp. If he is going on a
 484 long journey he usually leaves some of them with their parents, taking
 342 only one with him. When a house is to be built the women usually
 462 construct the ordinary windbreak type, but sometimes a man helps
 them. The husband brings in the heavy stringy bark for the small,
 dome-shaped house used by most of the people during the rainy
 season. The women keep the house clean. It is felt that the house be-
 longs to the man and the women.

595 The wives live in a fair degree of amiability, but there is sometimes
 578 jealousy over their husband.

Doring, a man past middle age, but still very active, had three wives,
 of whom Opossum was the youngest. He complained one day:

"My wives growl at each other all the time. The two old ones are good
 friends, but they are jealous of Opossum. They say to her, 'Why don't you
 get another man? This man is our husband. He made our children come.
 He belongs to us. He doesn't belong to you.' Opossum says, 'Where am I
 to go? My other dué are too old; I'd be the same as dead if I lived with

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776 laid his head back and went straight to sleep. This story indicates again
781 how sure everyone is that the totemic spirit is about during the time of
the ceremonies which celebrate his power.

H. THE CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE OF WIVES

- 852 1. Distant tribal brothers exchange wives.
786 2. The camp dance of the sexual pair and the exchange of gifts.
837 3. The night of ceremonial intercourse.

1. When the men from distant clans come in to see and participate in the Gunabibi ceremony, the older men, if they do not know their kinship to one another, work out their tribal relationships after much talk; this is mental exercise appreciated by all the more intelligent Murngin. When a local man discovers that a certain visitor from a far clan is his tribal brother, he sends his younger brother to inform this person that he may have the local man's wife for ceremonial copulation at the end of the Gunabibi ceremony. He sends presents along with the younger brother. The recipient, either through his own younger brother or through the messenger, offers his own wife in exchange, and also sends presents.

[431] This exchange of wives for ceremonial intercourse at the close of the Gunabibi serves as the grand finale of the entire ceremony. As a consequence, it is considered very dangerous and is surrounded with a fairly intricate ritual.

The above is the formal and correct way of exchanging wives for ceremonial purposes, but there are several other methods. Sometimes men agree, without the intermediation of messengers, to exchange their wives. Sometimes a man and woman arrange matters without first gaining the consent of the woman's husband; but without the final consent of the woman's spouse, this could not be recognized as legal procedure.

2. After the evening meal, and before the men return to the ceremonial grounds, they sit down in a half-circle around the fire and the women dance on the other side in front of them. The women and men [292] wear circlelets of fiber string around the head above the ears and across the forehead to indicate that the exchange arrangement has been made. While the women dance, various men arise, walk over to the women [431] and hand them presents of food, red ochre, or some other object of value. The woman presented with such a gift is the one with whom arrangements have supposedly been made for ceremonial copulation.

The man who is the wife's partner later privately again gives her

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The man who is the wife's partner later privately again gives her presents of spears or tobacco, red ochre, and the ordinary presents that are reciprocally exchanged. She accepts the present, keeps part of it, and gives the rest to her husband. The natives, both men and women, are much more interested in the ritual of giving and taking than in the value of the presents, which is never very great. There is usually considerable joking and amusement during this dance. Although intercourse is not to be consummated between the ceremonial partners until the last night of the ceremony, and then only for ceremonial purposes, there are a considerable number of clandestine meetings between these mates before that time. This is recognized by all, even though it is not considered regular or entirely proper.

After a man has had sexual intercourse with another man's wife, the latter male comes to him and puts his sweat on the legs and arms of his wife's partner so that the one who has been with his wife won't be "sick" from it. The position taken in the sexual act differs from the customary one (see page 78) in that the woman sits on the ground on the back of her buttocks. The trunk of the body leans back and at an angle from the legs, with the hands on the ground in back of the body to support it. The man puts his legs under hers and his hands around her so that the pudenda meet in closer contact than if he lay on her.

3. For the final occasion the men and women partners are heavily painted. On this night one woman may have sexual relations with several men because there is always a lack of women in the group attending the ceremony. If a woman shows a dislike for her ceremonial partner and refuses to join him, she is told she will be ill and make her husband and ceremonial mate ill, and she is forced to comply with her husband's demand. If a man refuses, the woman sends word that Mui will make him ill, and that she too will be sick.

Native Interpretation.—The ceremonial exchange of wives and participation in ritual intercourse is thought to be absolutely obligatory on the men and women. When a man or woman objects, the older men insist, as does the partner, that the person must do this or "Mui will make him ill" and the partner will become ill too. In speaking of the ceremonial sexual exchange I was told many times, "This makes everybody clean. It makes everyone's body good until next dry season."

The oldest leader of the Gunabibi in the area, in many ways the man best-informed on this ceremony, said to me, "Those two women [the Wawilak sisters], they walked down from the Wawilak country

852 and they made a corroboree like this one. Two Wawilak men came
 786 up to those women and 'played' with them. 'I think, sister, we will put
 837 white feathers all over and make this one [Gunabibi] higher and more
 773 dear [valuable] than the Djungguan. We will make this one so that
 every man can come and play with us.' When the Wawilak men
 played with them, those two sisters said these words, 'We will make
 this corroboree more high for people to play with each other. We
 are Wongar women, but when people come after us they can play
 with their women. It is better that everybody comes with their women
 and all meet together at a Gunabibi and play with each other, and
 then nobody will start having sweethearts the rest of the time.'"
 'This same man said, "Everybody paints himself not for nothing. We
 don't take this blood out of ourselves for nothing and paint ourselves
 with it. We don't sleep that night, and if a woman says, 'I won't go to
 that corroboree place with you,' the man says, 'If you don't go with
 me you are going to be dead.' Sometimes we kill that woman by magic,
 and throw spears at them if they won't do it."

852 I. THE FORKED POLES ARE ERECTED

1. The ridgepole is placed on two forked poles.
 2. The Yiritja snakes and the initiates are placed on it.
 3. The women and children of the camp gather by it.
 4. The line of men dances around the initiates and women.
 5. The taking of bread by the initiates.
 6. The initiated boys are taken to the ceremonial ground and their forehead bands removed.
1. The following morning, at the boundary line between the men's ceremonial ground and the general camp, two forked poles are placed in the ground about six feet apart from each other, and a thick connecting pole is placed in their forks. It is about four feet off the ground. The whole framework reproduces part of the framework of an ordinary house or platform. The pole is hung with branches from nearby trees so that the space from pole to ground is completely covered.
 2. The two Yiritja snakes go first to the structure and sit down in the forks of each pole. They lean back against the forks and face each other. They cry out with the same shrill call heard in the earlier ceremonies of the Gunabibi. Since dawn the bull roarers have been sounding and the women answering from the general camp. The initiates are placed under the bushes that hang down from the ridgepole; they

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to find little evidence of miscegenation among the blacks and Malays in northeast Arnhem Land. The writer measured a large number of individuals in this area and found only two individuals who might be classed as hybrid. The two skin colors were slightly lighter than the darker type of black, but no lighter than the type of pure Australoid found in the interior regions where there was no opportunity of racial mixture. These individuals also had the mongoloid broad head and straight hair. Their brachycephalism clearly marked them off from the dolichocephalic heads of the pure aborigines. The straight hair, however, was little different from that of the pure strains. There are several reasons for this lack of interbreeding. The first is the insistence of the people east of the Goyder River that their females remain monogamous and faithful. They are very different from the peoples to the west of this river, who center around the Liverpool River and Cape Don, where wife-lending and a kind of primitive prostitution are common. [837]

The writer, although he was frequently offered the wives of many of the men from the western regions as a friendly gesture, was never embarrassed by such offers from the more eastern people, except by two men, both of whom had lived for long periods of their lives in the west, and were considered "low fellows" by their tribesmen. This insistence on the faithfulness of wives chiefly accounts for the lack of mixture. A large proportion of the white men who sailed along the Arafura coast have been killed or attacked by the natives, because, in almost every case, of a white man's attempting to have illegal sexual relations with native women. The same conditions must have prevailed during Malay times. All the native informants insist on this fact. 837 144

In addition to the above reason for lack of racial mixture, there is the fact that the Malays also displayed a considerable wisdom in preventing trouble from breaking out between the two races through attempts to interfere with native women. They organized a system of guards or "policemen" to watch their men and prevent them from having contact with native women. All the blacks in this whole area speak very highly of the Malay traders, for they always mention first their generosity and immediately after this they say, "They let our women alone." In the same breath they will tell a white man whom they consider to be their friend that the white and Japanese traders are "no good" because they are stingy in their trade and are always trying to rape their women. 837 648

A number of white pearlers have been through the islands and along the coast, but no Caucasian half-castes are found in the region east of the Goyder River and north of Groote Eylandt. When one knows the "barnyard morals" of the average white trader, this is eloquent testimony to the high standards of native morality and of the chastity of their women. The lack of white hybrids is also explained by the feeling the [144] 648

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the mound piled beside the *ba'uma*. When the Wauwalak actors see the Snake, they act as if "they are shamed", here termed *g(w)o:ra'nganbinganbi*. They are "shamed" because they have the child, and their blood is running.⁷⁹⁶
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When this dance is over, two *dua* men bring out a pole from the darkness of the bush beside the sacred ground, and hold it horizontally, waist-high from the ground, on the concave side of the *ba'uma*. Within the crescent trench lie the young boys, and on the opposite (the convex, though sometimes on the concave) side of the *ba'uma* the *jelmalandji* stand, held by two men. Then, to the ritual crying of all participants, the *jelmalandji* are pushed over so that they hit the pole and tumble to the ground. They are picked up, and pushed over again; this is repeated several times, until the feathered ornaments on top of the *jelmalandji* fall off. The Julunggul are falling over, after swallowing the Wauwalak.

Then the young boys are removed from the *ba'uma* and placed on the mound beside it, while the *jelmalandji* are put in their place. Fire-sticks are thrown into the *ba'uma*, to burn the grass and paper-bark surrounding the central poles of the *jelmalandji*. At the same time men open their arm veins, sprinkling blood on one another and into the trench; this is the blood of the Wauwalak, and blood itself symbolizes life. Rows of dancing men come down the sacred ground and along the shallow trench, to and around the *ba'uma*, pushing the mound into the trench and gradually filling the hole, until the earth from dancing feet covers the *jelmalandji*, and the ground is flattened "so that no one will see that trench".⁷⁸⁵
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This completes the main section of the Kunapipi: the sequence of these rituals may be changed according to the inclination of the totemic leaders, or some may be omitted.

* * * *

This is followed by two concluding features: the ceremonial exchange of wives, and the return of the young boys into secular camp life. The latter always takes place at Yirrkalla; but local aborigines say that the former is less common, and it does not seem to be well integrated with indigenous social behaviour. Mission pressure has been brought to bear, in recent years, on the performance of the Kunapipi, and especially on ceremonial intercourse; but it is still practised at Millingimbi and Rose River, and away from white supervision on the settlements.⁷⁹⁶
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In other parts of the Territory where Kunapipi holds sway, and where "Big Sunday" is an integral part of native religious life, ceremonial copulation brings these rituals to a climax. It represents a

9. The word "shame" signifies "shyness", the normal feeling a menstruating woman feels towards a man who observes her blood. The European cultural connotation is lacking in this pidgin translation of the native term.⁸⁴¹

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837 culmination of all the religious and totemic ceremony of the past weeks, and helps to serve as an emotional outlet. It establishes goodwill between participants, and cements the bonds of friendship, bringing groups closer together. Ill-will and jealousy cannot, theoretically, flourish at such a ceremonial time. Moreover, it draws the women closer into the sacred scheme of the Kunapipi, by entering into the fundamental physical relationship between men and women: for the sexual act is basic to these rituals, its significance deeply rooted in the concept of procreation, brought about through the contact of male and female. Thus ceremonial copulation, ritualized in the Kunapipi, substantiates the religious doctrine, and stresses its underlying meaning of fertility.

Generally speaking, in the Kunapipi ceremonial areas, ritual copulation is termed *ka'rangara*; and in the Birrundudu Kadjari (equivalent of the Kunapipi) it is associated with certain special forms of dancing by men and women on the sacred ground. At Yirrkalla it is called *djumbinba*, meaning "the working", for natives use the word *djuma* ("work") when referring to the act of coitus. But the exchanging of wives is called *g'ruliriliri* or *liriliri*.

[609] Visitors who have come for the Kunapipi ceremonies have their correct tribal relationships established to everyone else in the camp. Most of those who are invited are known; but others come from far away (from Rose River, for instance, or from the south of Milingimbi), and it is necessary to determine their approximate relationship to others for the purpose of exchanging wives. This is done with much talk and discussion, comparing subsections, Dreaming affiliations, and so on. When a local man finds that a certain visitor is his classificatory brother, he will send his own younger brother to inform him that he may have the local man's wife for Kunapipi copulation; presents too are sent to the visitor, expressing goodwill. In return, the visitor sends a message that he will accept this arrangement, and that his own wife will come to the Kunapipi for ceremonial copulation with his local "brother"; he also sends presents. This is the normal procedure. But at times two men, without the aid of a third party, will decide between themselves to exchange wives; and occasionally, these days, a man may arrange matters with a visitor's wife (with whom he desires intercourse, or with whom he is having a liaison) without the consent of her own husband.

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[601] This means that usually in the Kunapipi a man will copulate with his "long way" brother's wife, whom he calls *kalei* (wife), normally a classificatory mother's brother's daughter or mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter, the daughter of her partner's *mukul* (mother's mother's brother's daughter). This, aborigines say, is the pattern for "the new generation", which differs from the traditional arrangement of the old people. In the old days (that is, prior to white [602] contact in this and adjacent areas) it was customary for ceremonial

796 On the final night, the Kitjin and the *ngumamali* dancing are
 786 repeated. The Kunapipi partners are ochred and heavily greased.
 835 The men sing and the women dance. As the singing and dancing continue, a man will rise and go over to his partner, take her by the arm, and lead her into the bush for sexual intercourse. One by one the men stand and take their partners into the surrounding shadows; and since there are usually fewer women than men, some women may have coitus a number of times. Men too may, if they choose, have coitus more than once during the night, either with the same partner, or with another woman whose husband has already been approached, and presents exchanged. Women, at this time, stimulated by days of anticipation, take a special pride in the number of men who copulate with them. After a man has had sexual intercourse with a woman, her husband comes to him and rubs his sweat on the man's legs and arms, so that he will not become ill from this ritual behaviour.

[431] There are several variations in the above pattern of ceremonial copulation, and we mention the two most important. While the dancing is in progress, the Kunapipi sexual partners may retire to a specially constructed shade or hut (which is the *murlk* of the Wau-walak) and have coitus. The woman either remains in the hut to receive other men, or returns to the dancing. Should there be more men than women at the ceremony, the woman will most likely remain in the hut for the evening, accepting one man after another. In this case, there may be several "huts" or windbreaks near the sacred ground, each woman taking possession of one. (Not all the female dancers retire to these huts; as mentioned, there are some who do not have partners.) This conforms more to the pattern of ceremonial copulation in the Roper River Kunapipi.

796 The second variation is in the manner of ceremonial copulation (the *ka'rangara*) throughout central-western Northern Territory.
 786 After the dancing, the women form two rows, according to their
 837 moieties, on the sacred ground; they are slightly apart from, though alongside each other. All lie down and assume a position ready for coitus. Their male partners dance forward and take positions before one line of women, while on the opposite side another row of men dances into the ground and stands in front of the other line. The men have their backs to one another, and their two rows are between the two rows of women; this arrangement prevents husbands from watching their wives. Then the men begin to have intercourse, some awaiting their turn. When a man has finished he goes to one side

[833] himself above the woman, or inserts paper-bark between their bodies. It is said that the sweat of the woman is possessed of great potency which, if transferred to the man, will cause him harm (that is, affect the specific sacredness of the act). However, this is not found in the north-eastern Arnhem Land area.

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of the ground, but is careful not to look over towards his wife. 796

Both of these variations are known at Yirrkalla, but are recognized as taking place outside their own Kunapipi area. 786

A man or woman will rarely refuse the ritual Kunapipi obligations of having coitus, or giving and receiving presents. Their frank attitude towards the question of sexual relations, and their understanding of the importance of such ritualized copulation, predetermines their full acceptance. Moreover, there is an obvious content of enjoyment, for both men and women are stimulated by the pre-coitus dancing and interchange of jokes. Should there be refusal, caused perhaps by the dislike of a certain Kunapipi partner, that man or woman is soon obliged to conform, for the thwarted partner will threaten to send Julunggul to the other and so cause sickness. 837

The initial incestuous relations of the Wauwalak Sisters with clansmen, as we have seen, are cited in explanation of this ceremonial copulation.¹⁵ There is also the deeper intent of fertility: the symbolic spiritual fructification of the Mother. There is a tendency to regard this sexual exchange of wives as providing an element of "danger"; for here are men and women copulating with the wives and husbands of others, virtually under their eyes and with one another's full (that is, in theory) sanction, and in "older times" with tabu-ed relatives. All is made possible on the sacred ground, under the "divine" sanction of the great Ancestral Beings and the Mother. The inclusion of ceremonial copulation in the Kunapipi is said to "raise its status to that of *mari* (mother's mother's brother, of the older generation)", but not to the high position retained by the *ngu:rlmak*, or the *dua* and *jiritja nara* Djanggawul and Laintjung rituals. [832] [753] [773] [789] [835]

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On the morning following the ritual intercourse, the final group of Kunapipi ceremonies is performed. 796

Just before dawn, all the *dua* men assemble at one end of the sacred ground, and the *jiritja* men at the other. The women have returned to the main camp, and the young initiates are sitting with their guardians. All the men are painted with white paint, spraying it over one another from their mouths; and most have spears. They begin to clap their spears, one against the other, and dance towards each other, changing sides. The bullroarers begin to twirl at this juncture, and the women answer their sound from the main camp. The men's dancing continues till sunrise, when the two moiety groups dance down to the boundary between the ceremonial ground and the main camp, taking the young boys with them. Here, to the accompaniment of the bullroarers' sound and ritual calling, they erect the [881] [778] [302] [535] [616]

15. Vide L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 307-8, who also provides a native interpretation of this aspect.

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794 Kunapipi performances has served to strengthen native belief in its
797 efficacy; but this tendency will last only as long as do the members
of "the older generation".

[831] By the driving underground, so to speak, of the Kunapipi, its
sexual element has become considerably accentuated. In some cases,
ritual copulation has lost a certain proportion of its sacred aura and
serves as an excuse for promiscuity. This aspect is particularly
apparent in contact areas where detribalization has taken place, and
intensive cultural disintegration has resulted.

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794 For example, on war-time Army Settlements during 1944-46 the
798 performance of the Kunapipi (or "Big Sunday", as it was called) was
648 forbidden by Civil and Army authorities alike, on the grounds that
the big religious ceremonies entailed interruption of normal work.
As a result of this prohibition very few of the sacred ceremonies were
carried out, although a number were performed surreptitiously some
distance from the Settlements, and were consequently of brief dura-
tion. One development of this external control was the accentuation
of sexual promiscuity through the medium of the "Big Sunday", and
the indiscriminate use of sacred tabus for the materialistic ends of a
minority. In the latter case, food, clothing, and other goods were
sometimes declared sacred, and could in this way be taken over by
the person or the group pronouncing the tabu.

Whole areas of the settlement would, unknown to the womenfolk,
be declared ritually sacred to men: latrines, washing-sheds, camps,
roads and so on were pronounced tabu-ed to women. A woman
inadvertently entering the demarcated area would be threatened with
● [837] punishment, which she could avert through payment of goods or
sexual favours: usually, of course, she preferred to "pay" with
coitus.

This practice reached such proportions that Settlement officers
endeavoured strongly to oppose it, and cited it as an additional
reason for prohibiting the Kunapipi ceremonies; nevertheless the
habit persisted, and seems to have aroused interest and enjoyment
among both men and women. On the Daly River, west of Darwin, a
rather similar practice has become institutionalized, in attempts to
reinforce a religious life which is fast disappearing because of the
disrupting effects of local European contact over a comparatively
long period. Other examples, too, could be brought forward to con-
firm this particular distortion of "Big Sunday" religion.

But these features are abnormal; they have been brought about by
circumstances beyond the control of the natives themselves, and
represent merely one unpleasant result of uncontrolled or badly
planned contact between two widely differing cultures. They would
not normally appear, for they are not a part of indigenous religious
life.

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794 We might well ask what is the future of a cult like the Kunapipi.

ALIEN CONTACT IN NORTH-EASTERN ARNHEM LAND

The important secular ceremony of the carved wuramu figure the "Collection" or "Crook Man", was directly inspired by what 177
Aborigines had seen in Macassar and at home on the mainland. 527

At various places along the coast the visitors declared certain rocks to be sacred. They called them *karei*, or "King" rocks, and placed on them food and money as offerings to a guardian spirit. At the beginning and end of the trading season, it is said that the Indonesian fleets met in Arnhem Bay to perform ceremonies that culminated in wild debauchery. Alcohol was freely distributed. There were singing and dancing, fighting and flashing of knives, and the prostitution of Aboriginal women. But such scenes were more frequent during the later phase of Indonesian contact.

During the earlier period of contact the relations between the 177
Aborigines and the traders seem to have been most amiable, although perhaps the memory of this has mellowed with the 648
passing of time. Trafficking in women, according to their tradi- 548
tion, was more carefully controlled. Organised relationships were 837
set up, where women went more or less automatically to the trading partners of their husbands or parents; and during the Indonesians' ceremonial periods they made gifts of food and other goods to the Aborigines, who reciprocated by sending over their women. Aboriginal women used to work in and around the huts of these traders, and the important leaders, such as captains of praus, maintained their own mistresses. It is said too that Indonesian women were very occasionally brought to these shores, but those who did come were for the most part treated as prostitutes. Alcohol was not so plentiful during this early phase of contact, and it was not until the period from about 1800 until 1907, when Indonesian trading was prohibited by the Commonwealth Government of Australia, that severe fights and brawls became common in these coastal settlements.

Over the years these visitors took back with them to Macassar 177
numbers of Aboriginal men and women. Some of them were 167
returned in the following season to their home camps in Australia while others remained behind in their new environment.⁷

It is difficult, after so great a lapse of time, to be sure of the 177
actual state of affairs in regard to sexual relations between Indo- 548
nesian traders and Aboriginal women. Many Aboriginal men 837
today deny that their womenfolk had illicit sexual relations to

ARNHEM LAND

177 any extent with the visitors, and Professor Lloyd Warner used
 548 such statements as a basis for his opinion that the Malay traders
 837 did not interfere with native women.⁸ But the women themselves
 offer a different point of view, and so do the songs and stories
 which have survived to the present day. Men are often unwilling
 to admit that they themselves, or people of their group, were
 induced by threats or by liquor to barter their wives and daughters,
 or that they allowed them to go to the traders because of
 their ties of friendship and trading relations. Often they attempt
 to "cover up" the fact that certain people are half or part Macassan,
 by insisting that their light skin has a spiritual rather than a
 purely physical explanation. The women, however, are more
 candid, and many of the older ones among them openly regret
 the passing of the Indonesian traders. Such an apparent contradiction
 is not unusual in matters of this kind, when casual liaisons
 have been carried out over a long period and then brought
 suddenly to an end through pressure of external circumstances.

177 The contacts of these Baijini and Indonesian people may have
 [152] influenced the temperament of the coastal Aborigines, for they
 are (broadly speaking) more hasty tempered and emotional than
 the southern and central Aborigines, given to aggressive displays
 of anger and elementary warfare. The physical effects, however,
 [144] apart from the infusion of an alien strain in the Aboriginal stock,
 733 seem to have been negligible; their indulgence in alcoholic drinks
 appears to have had no effect upon their general well-being,⁹
 [164] while venereal diseases are virtually unknown in this eastern
 region.¹⁰ This contrasts with conditions at Goulburn Island and
 Oenpelli, in western Arnhem Land, where the prevalence of
 venereal diseases (especially gonorrhoea) seems to have led to a
 [163] high incidence of sterility, and so to a declining birth rate.
 837 Western Arnhem Land Aborigines have a reputation of being
 sexually rather lax, whereas various writers have expressed the
 opinion that the eastern Arnhem Landers are less willing to trade
 their womenfolk and have consequently been better able to regulate
 their sexual relations with "outside" people. Actually this
 impression seems to have its origin in the fact that the sexual
 pattern of both societies shows certain differences. The one is

ALIEN CONTACT IN NORTH-EASTERN ARNHEM LAND

more inclined to be blatant about sexual associations, while the other, perhaps equally promiscuous, is less willing to acknowledge this fact in public. 837

Even before the memorable meeting of Captain Mathew Flinders with Pobassoo, on 17 February 1803,¹¹ in the "Malay Road" between the English Company Islands and the mainland near Cape Wilberforce, Dutch and Portuguese voyagers had visited the north coast of Australia,¹² but their contact with the Aborigines seems to have been only transitory and unimportant. Before this, too, there is reason to believe that these coastal people had some association with native groups of the Torres Strait Islands and southern New Guinea. This subject is treated in one of the long song cycles of eastern Arnhem Land — although in later years, when the Missions introduced Badu Islanders (from the Torres Straits), these indigenous songs proved receptive in some degree to new ideas concerning that area.¹³ 175 177 [173 538]

Mathew Flinders was followed by other explorers and surveyors,¹⁴ until in the last quarter of the nineteenth century European traders became increasingly familiar with the Arnhem Land coast. About this time the relations between Macassans and the Aborigines began to deteriorate, and a number of massacres of these Indonesian visitors¹⁵ were reported. Intercourse between Aborigines and Europeans was far from amicable. Mass shootings took place, native women were abducted, and some white men were speared. There was an attempt to settle part of the "Arafura" country, between Milingimbi and Elcho Island; in 1885 Florida cattle station was established near Mount Delight, between the Woolen and Blyth rivers.¹⁶ 175 648 177

When the Macassan visits to the north coast came to an end there was an influx of Japanese pearl-ers and traders, and a few Europeans began to concentrate on trepanging. These people employed on their boats Aborigines from Darwin, Bathurst and Melville Islands and Goulburn Islands, as well as natives from the Torres Strait Islands, so that the coastal Arnhem Landers came in contact with a variety of "racial" types. The Japanese, for example, did not remain for long on friendly terms with the local natives; there were occasional spearings and massacres,

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A BLACK CIVILIZATION

159 you. You're not a man." This makes her quiet. I think sometimes if I did
 593 have a sweetheart I wouldn't tell her, because none of the other men do
 837 when they have them.

159 When I was a young man, women were more careful and better than
 837 they are now. My brother, Badunga, is just starting to grow a mustache. This no-good woman we call the Mokoi [evil ghost] has already tried to seduce him. My brother was out hunting the other day with some other boys, and when he was a little bit away from them that Mokoi woman saw him. She was getting shells, away from the rest of the women. She is no longer a young woman. She has no children because she has copulated with too many men who were not her husbands. She sneaked up on him and talked very nice to him, but my brother Badunga did nothing and came away. He was afraid, and besides he did not like the woman.

159 Badunga told me. I went down to her husband's camp and told him.
 684 I called that Mokoi out and gave her a very hard beating. Her husband, who is my "half-father," did nothing. When I had finished he took a spear-thrower and started beating her too. All the people in the camp said that was very good and was what she needed.

159 Women before were different. They sat down more quiet than they do
 837 now. This one, who is now Dimala's wife, who used to be my sweetheart when I was a young boy, seduced one of the Ritarngo boys. He is too young, I said, "I don't know what is the matter with you women now. You are going after younger and younger boys all the time for sweethearts. I shall have to watch Mari-ma-leen and Pulli [his 18-months-old son and three-year-old boy], or you will have them out too. You are ruining our young men because you are teaching them to have too many women who don't belong to them. They won't sit quiet with their own wives when they have them because you women teach them another way. When we old men
 [836] were young, a man had one sweetheart and no more until he was married and had proper wives of his own."

159 If the sweetheart I had a long time ago would come to me now and
 572 ask for food I must give it to her. I would not have sexual relations with
 837 her now, because I am a married man and that would be wrong. When I go to her camp she gives me food. Her husband is a good man; he says to that woman, "Give Mahkarolla some food. He used to be your sweetheart." If he were no good and jealous, he would growl at the woman and tell her not to give me anything to eat. I haven't any sweethearts now. Dimala's wife used to be my sweetheart a long time ago. She likes me very much now. Sometimes she comes around and wants me to go out to the bush with her but I say, "No, I've got a wife. I have children." I will not "play" with another woman. I would get a baby (pages 74-92).

MAHKAROLLA AND MURNGIN SOCIETY

583

Sometimes a man and a woman run away because they like each other too much. This is a bad thing. Marriages should be arranged properly and people should do things that we do here when things are right. No one here likes runaway marriages. When people like each other too much it always makes trouble for all their relatives and for them (pages 86-88). ¹⁵⁹ 583

Some women stay no good. A man can give them a good hiding and what do they do? They go straight away and look for a new sweetheart. They are all the same as someone with an evil spirit in their heads. ¹⁵⁹ 837

His CHILDREN

When my son was born, I was very happy. Many moons before I had come back from a Djungguan python dance. I went to sleep by my campfire and had a dream. In the dream the spirit child came to me and said, "I am bringing something from Wongar to you. I am looking for my mother." I said to him, "Where do you come from?" ¹⁵⁹ 787 842

He said, "I came from your totem well. I am bringing a barrimundi fish for you" (pages 67-69).

I got up and walked around in the morning time. I went down close to the water along the beach. I saw a large barrimundi floating on the water. When he came close up, the tide threw this fish right up on the sand bank. I looked at him. His tail was moving. I thought quickly, "Oh, this one is from that dream." That fish was all the same as dead when I came up close. I took my spear-thrower, hooked it inside his mouth, and pulled him all the way along through the water and carried him back to camp. I left him there. I called out to a man. "You come help me," I said. "Come help carry this fish and get a fire ready."

The man said, "You lift him up yourself."

I said, "No, he is too big for me."

We two carried the barrimundi back to camp. We cooked him. One man cooked the liver and tasted it. He said, "It is very sweet and very fat but tastes very different."

I said, "Yes, it is different. I dreamed this one."

We started next day for a ceremony. We danced all night. We danced for over a moon.

Before my daughter came I did not dream at first. One day I was out hunting turtles. I saw a little bird. It was like a little fish in the sea. The little bird flew on one side of me and then the other. I heard him say, "Wheel! Wheel!" It was all the same as the wind in the trees. I thought then, "This is a spirit after me." I went ashore. I slept and I dreamed. This little bird came to me in the dream and said, "Father, I have come to you. Where is my mother?"

JUNGLE LORE AND ETIQUETTE

touch it, or for his brothers to do so either. The night was hideous with their quarrelling, and though the brothers attacked the old man with their spear-throwers, he loudly proclaimed the tabu and the youths dared not eat the meat.

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Sexual intercourse is accepted as a natural function, not to be affected by proximity to the family circle or to other families camped a few feet away, nor yet by occasional unseemly interest from the young men's camp. Even in east Arnhem Land, where a strict morality is outwardly enforced, intercourse is little less than promiscuous, and it is not to be wondered at that most youths laughingly admit their *affaires d'amours*, and that women frequently make the initial advance—though secretly for fear of their husbands.

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To prevent irregularities, married men enforce a number of prohibitions, and unmarried and unattached men are segregated in a camp by themselves at a reasonable distance from any family. A woman is not allowed to eat food presented to her husband by a youth, in case he should consider her to be under an obligation to him, and if a youth wishes to share his food with a married brother, he must not go to his camp but must call him over and give it to him.

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In many relationships it is unlawful for a man and woman to greet each other, and when I have asked for a name, I have often been greeted by evasion or silence, simply because no one present was allowed to utter the name. Brothers and sisters may not look at each other when speaking, but talk with averted faces. A man converses freely with his wife, mother, daughter, granddaughter, and niece; but when speaking to other relatives he averts his face, and not being able to call them by name he draws their attention by an ejaculation or by saying: 'I wish to

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FAMILY LIFE IN THE JUNGLE

Theories of conception and birth have been severely 842
 jolted in recent years, for until recently it was not known that 177
 intercourse had any connection with conception, and
 Yulengor regarded it as being merely a natural and satisfying 831
 function. There are no virgins in aboriginal society, for at
 an early age a girl is handed over to her husband and is
 married for the rest of her life. In parts of western Arnhem 574
 Land, when hordes gather for ceremonies, their hosts provide 837
 them with food and also advance their wives for the visitors'
 well-being. The question of illegitimate children does not 848
 arise, for births are thought to be the work of a spirit.

At some time when the potential father is hunting, the 842
 spirit of his prospective child comes to him and presents him 787
 with a large fish or turtle and enables him to spear it. Not
 yet comprehending the omen, the man returns to camp with
 the spirit at heel, and when all are asleep this spirit enters the
 mother and begins its preparations for birth. In a variation
 of this belief, the spirit follows the mother when she goes for
 water, and jumps into the water so as to enter the woman.
 When a man knows that his wife is to become a mother he
 endeavours to recall some unusual experience that has
 befallen him in hunting. His mind dwells on any large fish
 he has caught, perhaps in the last month, or maybe several
 years previously, and he regards this incident as marking
 the coming of the spirit-child.

Half-caste children compelled a readjustment of these 842
 ideas. First it was assumed that eating the white man's food 177
 or the wearing of white clothing caused white-skinned
 offspring. An anthropologist, visiting an Arnhem Land
 mission station at the invitation of a missionary of irre-
 proachable character, asked an aboriginal why his normal
 full-blood son had a light skin. The father's startling reply
 was: 'The child's mother works in the missionary's house.'

According to a revised and popular birth theory, inter- 842
 course is necessary only as an act of preparation. In itself 833